



Engineering Minnesota's Future

MGEC Board Minutes

December 19, 2011, 3:30 p.m.

	Present		Present
President Linda Heath	X	Director (vacant)	
Vice President Mohammad Dehdashti	X	Director Joe Fleisher	
Past President John Siekmeier	X	Director Jerry Kotzenmacher	X
Secretary Marilyn Jordahl Larson	X	Director Mike Lownsbury	X
Treasurer Jessica Forsberg	X	Director Bruce Tanquist	X
Director Bob Dehler	X	Director Ryan Wilson	X
Director Ann Driver		Executive Director Dana Wheeler	X
Director Andrew Eller	X	Administrative Asst. Rhonda Bauer	X
Director-elect Jeffrey Cremin	X	Director-elect Aida Mendez	X

- I. **Call to Order:** President Heath called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Two of the new board members Aida Mendez (PCA-Water) and Jeff Cremin (DPS) were present. Their terms officially begin 1/1/12. Linda thanked departing board members John Siekmeier and Bruce Tanquist for their service.

- II. **President's Report (Linda)**
 - a. **Compensation Study:** MGEC met with MnDOT to discuss the survey and the organizations that will be surveyed. The 2008 survey included 30 public agencies and 30 private organizations. More private sector companies will be surveyed this time. It was difficult to get responses from federal employers. We may be able to use public data since insurance will not be included and the survey will focus on direct compensation only. The state agreed the area of insurance was a wash on the first survey. The survey questions were reviewed by MnDOT market research staff for clarity and will be edited to reflect their recommendations.
 - b. **Contract Negotiations:** We have another preliminary meeting with the state this week to explore each other's interests and talk about various negotiation processes that might facilitate reaching a voluntary tentative agreement. AFSCME and MAPE have already started bargaining contract language; to date there discussion has been language proposals only. MGEC and the other bargaining units continue bargaining insurance issues. The State wants employees to pay a premium for employee only health insurance. They also want to split a projected cost of \$122 million for anticipated health cost increases and progression steps.

- III. **Administrative Assistant Report (Rhonda)**
 - a. **Membership Report:** Currently there are 922 members--up by six from last month.
 - b. **Contact Lists:** Distribution lists were sent out to all contacts earlier this month to bring the lists up to date and make sure all members are included on a contact list. We'll transition over the next year to having all Associates on a separate list.

- c. **MGEC Website:** Jerry suggested expanding the website to be more clear about who we are. Possibly include Facebook and Twitter links. Jerry, Ryan and Jessica volunteered to review the website and present ideas to the board regarding what information we would include, connection to other sites and required monitoring. The website is managed in-house. Dana noted that we have an “about” section on the website that talks about MGEC and includes two of our brochures which discuss the services members provide as state employees.

IV. Agency Reports

- a. **DNR:** No report.
- b. **PCA (Jessica):** The next LMC (Labor Management Committee) meeting is scheduled for the Tuesday after Christmas. The chairs have proposed to schedule the meetings every other month. There are many items to discuss so Jessica gathered notes from past years and items that require follow up to make the case that the LMC needs to meet every month. John asked about the issues around the permitting process. Jessica said no one has brought their concerns to a committee or union level at this point. He noted for the minutes that MGEC will support members and their concerns and provide representation at the LMC, and encourages members to bring their issues to MGEC.
- c. **MDH (Bob):** A grievance meeting is scheduled for Dec. 20, 2011, on the class action regarding MDH’s policy on personal phone calls while in travel status.

V. Treasurer Report (Jessica)

- a. **Account Status:** Jessica reviewed the report (handout). Dana asked if the board felt the dues increase should be included in the current financial reports. The board advised it should not until it is built into the budget—that the reports should reflect the budget that was passed at the annual meeting. The dues increase takes effect beginning 1/4/11; the first full pay period of 2012.
- b. **Dues Increase:** Mohammad asked about comments from members on the dues increase. There have been a few, to which Dana has responded. The board plans to discuss the increase at the annual meeting, including it as an agenda item, and also to discuss the building purchase. Jerry said to keep in mind the surplus is not gone; it is invested in the building. John suggested that we share the current appraisal (both 2010 and 2011) with the members.
- c. **Approval:** Motion to approve the treasurer’s report subject to audit, 2nd, passed.

VI. Past President Report (John)

- a. **September 2012 Executive Board Minutes Item IV.A:** *“JS motion: The MGEC Executive Board agrees that the most qualified MGEC member, as defined in the MGEC agreement, should be hired to fill an open position. [Qualified is defined in Article 13 - Seniority, Layoff & Recall - Section 1H as the employee meets the registration, experience and/or education requirements for initial appointment: to the position.] A motion similar to this was rejected by the Negotiations Committee. Motion failed. 2 in favor--John, Bruce; 3 against-- Mohammad, Mike, Linda (voted because it was a tie); 6 abstain--Jerry, Marilyn, Bob, Joe, Andrew, Ann.”* This is currently posted on our website. John said it reads as though MGEC does not agree that

the most qualified person should fill a position, and do we really want this on the record? Since there were six abstentions, John would like the motion to be reconsidered. Only someone from the prevailing side—Linda (who had voted to break a tie), Mohammad, or Mike—may remake the motion. Linda asked if there were any new motions. The board referred back to Page 13, Article 11 of the negotiation notes and discussion of most qualified person and most qualified lateral. John made a motion to add to Article 11, Section 3c/3d. A.: Posted vacancies will be filled with the most qualified candidates in the following order.... Discussion ensued about the inconsistencies on postings of specifying exactly what the minimum qualifications are. Motion 2nd. Yays 3, nays 4, 1 abstain. Motion failed. Mohammad made a friendly amendment to strike the word “most.” Bruce 2nd. Ryan said the motion forces him to go on record as not accepting the word “qualified.” Motion failed 3-5.

- b. **Maplewood Meeting:** A membership meeting was held on 11/22/11, in which concerns were raised by some of the members. John gave a list of the concerns to the board which the board will address.

VII. Vice Presidents Report (Mohammad)

- a. **Negotiations Update:** The update was prepared but it was decided not to post publicly. Members may contact Dana directly for an update. A meeting is scheduled with state negotiator Barb Holmes and labor relations representative Jim Jorstad on 12/22/11, to discuss how to move ahead with contract negotiations. The MGEC negotiations committee has completed its work and the bargaining team will continue when there is reason to proceed. The current agreement continues in effect past 6/30/2011, providing members with step increases as well as continuing the current insurance package/premiums.
- b. **Surface Transportation Authorization (STA):** The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee passed a two-year, \$109 million STA to which consulting engineers attempted to insert an amendment to encourage state DOTs to “utilize private engineering firms to the maximum extent possible.”

VIII. Executive Director Report (Dana)

- a. **Building Update**
 - i. **Property Tax:** Dana discussed the status of the building property tax appeal. The Dakota County Assessor confirmed that we will retain our rights as property owners to sign off or not sign off on any agreement, and further, that he will work with us to resolve our concerns if the building association’s legal representative will not work with us. Additional details were provided in his status report.
 - ii. **Association Votes:** Two votes are coming up: 1) a street-side office complex sign which has room for only eight business names; 2) a second tax appeal. The board’s consensus was to vote no on both items.

IX. Consent Agenda - Approval of Minutes, Treasurer Report, Audit

- a. **November minutes:** Motion to approve, with a correction to Item II.C to state “Dana may request a sabbatical...”
- b. **Council of Engineering and Scientists Organizations:** John asked about the value we are getting from our membership in CESO, and suggested we consider the benefits of contributing to local efforts. Dana stated that our membership is voluntary and we can withdraw at any time. Dana’s reports to the board after a CESO meeting have included an update of CESO discussions or actions. Table this to the next meeting.
- c. **MN 2050:** Bruce requested to add MN2050 dues to next month’s agenda. A one-time payment of \$500 was deferred to the next meeting. *Liquid Assets* is currently being broadcast. Bruce has the DVD if anyone wants to view it. MGEC is listed in the credits. *Roads and Bridges* is the next project, publicizing the need to maintain our infrastructure.
- d. **MFESTS:** Bruce was elected secretary of MFESTS (Minnesota Federation of Engineering, Science and Technology Societies).
- e. **Works Museum:** The Works Museum’s high priority is for schools to promote science and engineering. The board should discuss if it wants to send a notice to members and provide information on how they may contribute.
- f. **Transportation Alliance:** Margaret Donahoe would like to attend a board meeting. Dana has discussed the possibility of holding MGEC’s Day at the Capitol the same day as the Transportation Alliance.
- g. **Annual Meeting Minutes:** These were reviewed and there were no objections to posting them on the website. They are in draft form until approval at the next annual meeting.

X. Other Committees

- a. **Nominations (Marilyn):** Dana and Marilyn itemized (handout) their proposed changes to the constitution, by-laws and/or policies to address the election process. This item was tabled.

XI. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 7:38 p.m. The next executive board meeting is Monday, January 23, 2012, 3:30 p.m. at the MGEC office.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Jordahl-Larson
Secretary

Rhonda Bauer
Administrative Assistant